

yesterday," he said. "Reporters who have exposed government corruption and brutality have received anonymous telephone calls telling them that 'it is dangerous to report against the government,'" Dr. Aulakh said.

Mr. Aulakh urged the United States government to stop supporting the government of India. "India has joined with China, Russia, Cuba, and Libya in action against the U.S. at the United Nations," he noted. "India tried to build a security alliance against the United States. It recently celebrated the anniversary of its nuclear explosion and reiterated its refusal to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. India is a major human-rights violator. Amnesty International has not been allowed into the country since 1978," he pointed out. "Yet it remains one of the top recipients of U.S. aid."

The Indian government has murdered more than 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1988, more than 60,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Manipuris, Tamils, Dalit "untouchables," and others. Tens of thousands of Sikhs languish in Indian jails without charge or trial, some since 1984.

"Why should the American taxpayers be forced to support a country where there is no religious freedom, no freedom of the press, and no human rights for minorities?" he asked. "Why should America support a country that is so vehemently anti-American?" he said. "The time has come for America to defend freedom in South Asia by defending Mr. Osan and other journalists, by cutting off aid to India, and by supporting the 17 freedom movements within India's artificial borders," Dr. Aulakh said.

TRIBUTE TO WILLENE C. NESBITT

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Willene C. Nesbitt of Concord, North Carolina for her commitment and dedication to her community.

On Saturday, May 22, 1999, Mrs. Nesbitt will be celebrating her retirement from Northeast Medical Center in Concord. Mrs. Nesbitt has worked for more than 50 years at Northeast Medical Center, formerly Cabarrus Memorial Hospital, and has helped it grow and change into the fine regional hospital it is today.

The celebration on Saturday is not only a retirement celebration, but also a show of appreciation for all of her efforts in the community.

Mrs. Nesbitt has been active in the Shankletown-Sidetown Community Organization. She was one of the founding board members of this organization.

One project that she recently spearheaded was gathering members of the community and surrounding areas together to help rebuild an elderly woman's dilapidated home to make it liveable again. Her selfless acts of kindness have brought so many in our community a better life.

Mrs. Nesbitt and her husband, John C. Nesbitt, have also been active in their church, Gilmore Chapel AME Zion Church.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Willene Nesbitt in her retirement from the hospital, but hope that her community activity will only escalate with her new found free time. She truly brings a smile to the faces of the people she touches and improves the quality of life for everyone in Cabarrus County.

HONORING MRS. ELLA SCHWARTZ

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with sadness to remember and honor a legendary figure from my district, Mrs. Ella Schwartz. She passed away last week at the age of 80. Ella Schwartz was an icon of the city of Torrance and she has left a lasting impression on the city she called home.

Ella Schwartz was the daughter of Sam Levy, a founding father of the city of Torrance. The Sam Levy Department Store was the premier place to shop in the 1940's and 1950's. Following the death of her father in 1965, Mrs. Schwartz assumed control of the department store and in 1988 she transformed it into a women's boutique, naming it Ella's.

Ella Schwartz was actively involved in the community. She will be forever be linked to the revitalization of downtown Torrance. She was devoted to the city of Torrance, becoming a symbol of the city's heart and center.

Ella was a permanent fixture at her boutique until law year when she decided that it was time to retire and spend more time with her grandson. She was 79.

People will remember her fiery spirit and her dedication to improving the city of Torrance. She will be missed but not forgotten.

HONORING SHARI G. LAMBERT

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a woman who has dedicated herself to improving the quality of life in my hometown of Flint, Michigan. On May 21, 1998, Mrs. Shari Lambert will be the guest of honor as family and friends gather to celebrate her retirement after 25 years of dedicated public service.

Shari Lambert has never once hesitated to reach out and help someone in need. Since 1974, she has worked for the Michigan Employment Security Commission, now known as the Michigan Unemployment Agency. Most recently, Shari worked as Manager for the Agency's Flint branch.

For 25 years, Shari has worked with thousands of individuals, ensuring that each one was set on the road toward prosperous and gainful employment. Her dedication to being an active public servant set a positive tone in each branch of the Michigan Employment Security Commission, as well as its successor, the Michigan Unemployment Agency. She has

served as a role model for efficiency, compassion, and fairness. Many Michigan residents owe their ability to provide for themselves and others to Shari's influence.

In addition to her work with the Unemployment Agency, Shari serves as a member of several Workforce Development Boards, such as the Career Alliance Board, Greater Pontiac Area Consortium Board, and Macomb/St. Clair Board. She can also be found working with groups within Macomb County such as Growth Alliance, the Private Industry Council, the School to Work/Tech Prep Board, the Human Services Coordination Body, the Macomb County Economic Club, and the Central Macomb Chamber of Commerce. She has also been a member of the Flint Chamber of Commerce, and is a past president of the Michigan chapter of the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security.

Mr. Speaker, many people, not only in the city of Flint, have been granted a new lease on life because of the dedication of Shari Lambert. As it is our duty to preserve and protect the quality and dignity of life for our constituents, let us remember that our task is made easier by people like Shari. I ask my colleagues in the 106th Congress to join me in acknowledging the accomplishments of Shari Lambert. We owe her a debt of gratitude.

A TRIBUTE TO REVITALIZATION OF THE SOUTHERN AREA OF THE SLOPE (ROSAS) ON THE OCCASION OF ITS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS BANQUET

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to pay tribute to Revitalization of the Southern Area of the Slope (ROSAS) on the occasion of its Community Service Awards Banquet.

The members of ROSAS have long been known for their commitment to community service and to enhancing the quality of life for all New York City residents.

This banquet is not only a festive happening, it is a chance for all of us to celebrate and pay tribute to a group of individuals who have dedicated their lives to helping others. This year's honorees truly represent the best of what our community has to offer.

Simon Brooking is the President of the 6th Avenue & 15th Street Community Garden and a former ROSAS board member. He is a staunch advocate for community green spaces, composting and ROSAS' anti graffiti campaign. His painting company, The Flying Scotsman, helped art teacher Alison Conte and local children create a mural on 14th Street and 5th Avenue in Brooklyn. Simon and his wife Sheila have built a partnership with the Sierra Club to promote organic waste composting. Perhaps the Garden's greatest gift is providing area children with the opportunity to express themselves through their gardening and artistic talents. The Children's Creative Workshop, now entering its fourth year, is one such program that is available to Park Slope's children.

Carolyn Greer has spent the last four and a half years with New York State Senator Marty Markowitz and has lived up to the Senator's mandate that his staff be responsive to the needs of his constituents. As the Senator's Director of Community Programming, she handled complaints, responded to issues and identified and addressed community needs. Carolyn Greer is a founding member of South Brooklyn Hockey, which has ice and roller teams, and serves on the board of the Russian American Kids Circus. She is the author of the PS 321 Newsletter and is the founder of the PS 321 Holiday Helper Project, an annual drive for new clothes that are donated anonymously to several hundred needy public school children.

As ROSAS' Co-President in 1993 and 1994, Roger C. Melzer documented the extensive damage being done to Prospect Park by unrestricted barbecuing, organized community meetings to discuss the problem and worked to have regulations and enforcement imposed. He remains a strong advocate for more enforcement, better maintenance and more capital funding to preserve the natural aspects of Prospect Park. As a twenty-year resident of Park Slope, Roger has been a regular participant at Community Boards 6 and 7 meetings where his focus has been to ensure that city agencies provide service to residents in Park Slope and Windsor Terrace and to facilitate new initiatives as a means of resolving neighborhood problems.

All of today's honorees have long been known as innovators and beacons of good will to all those with whom they come in contact. Through their dedicated efforts, they have each helped to improve my constituents' quality of life. In recognition of their many accomplishments on behalf of my constituents, I offer my congratulations on their being honored by ROSAS.

INTRODUCTION OF MEDICARE
MODERNIZATION #4 MEDICARE
PERMANENT COMPETITIVE BID-
DING AUTHORITY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and Representative McDERMOTT, I am pleased today to introduce the fourth bill in my Medicare modernization package: permanent competitive bidding authority. As with the other bills in this series, competitive bidding will save money for Medicare, while also improving the quality of health services provided to Medicare beneficiaries. These modernizations are a template for meaningful Medicare reform that allows us to avoid radical, untried theories that could endanger the program's future.

The promise of managed care is coordinated, comprehensive, cost-effective health services. Medicare+Choice plans are not currently living up to this promise. For some time now, Medicare has over-paid Medicare+Choice plans. Current overpayments are estimated to cost Medicare and taxpayers \$2 to \$3 billion per year. This is be-

cause Medicare+Choice has attracted only the healthiest beneficiaries—people who would have cost next to nothing had they stayed in the traditional fee-for-service plan—leaving a much sicker population in the traditional program.

In addition, managed care plans are disenrolling beneficiaries who need expensive services, such as heart surgery, and then re-enrolling the beneficiary after the fee-for-service plan has paid the bill. The OIG estimates that in 1991 through 1996, Medicare spent \$224 million for inpatient services furnished to beneficiaries within three months of their disenrollment. Had these beneficiaries not disenrolled, Medicare could have spent only \$20 million in capitation payments. That's \$204 million in savings Medicare could have realized. "Cherry picking" such as this has forced fee-for-service costs to rise.

Because Medicare+Choice payments are tied to fee-for-service cost, rather than the actual cost of providing care to beneficiaries enrolled in managed care, Medicare continues to over-pay health plans. De-linking Medicare+Choice payments from the fee-for-service program will enable Medicare to pay a more realistic price for managed care services. Fostering greater competition through competitive bidding will help to achieve this goal.

Competitive bidding would take place in both the managed care and fee-for-service Medicare programs. Under this bill, the Secretary of DHHS would have the explicit authority to select items, services, and geographic areas to be included in a bidding or negotiation process based on the availability of providers and the potential to achieve savings. To protect quality, the bill would require that providers meet specified quality standards in order to participate in the bidding process.

Competitive bidding is almost universal throughout the private sector and in many other areas of government contracting. However, HCFA is still forced to go through tortured demonstration processes to "test" this basic tool of capitalism.

At this moment, HCFA is trying to get three competitive bidding demonstration projects off the ground: two Medicare+Choice demonstrations, one in Phoenix and one in Saint Louis; and one fee-for-service demonstration for durable medical equipment (DME). Unfortunately, the industry is blocking HCFA's attempt because they know that competitive bidding will force them to charge a more realistic price. This is not about cutting services to beneficiaries or lowering quality standards. It's about helping the taxpayer so that society has the money to improve Medicare for everyone while extending the life of the program. Competitive bidding can work. It has worked in the public and private sectors for centuries. We should make it work for Medicare too.

As we search for ways to secure and improve Medicare, it is appropriate to consider increasing the efficiency of the program through competition. Introducing competition into the managed care equation will achieve greater efficiencies, higher quality, and cost savings, and will enable Medicare managed care to live up to its promise.

Following is a portion of an interview from the May/June 1999 issue of Health Affairs by

Princeton professor Uwe Reinhardt with HHS Secretary Donna Shalala which describes how different it has been to make progress on this simple, basic, free enterprise approach to health care:

THE CONTROVERSY OVER COMPETITIVE
BIDDING

Reinhardt: In my time, Medicare has been a pioneer in innovating with the DRG (diagnosis-related group)—based hospital payment system, which has been copied worldwide, and the Medicare physician fee schedule, which has been copied by private American payers. If we are ever going to really test managed competition by having health plans compete fairly for enrollees, only HCFA (the Health Care Financing Administration) can actually show the way, because the private sector has not yet done it so far. Do you share that view?

Shalala: I share that view, but the political system has to buy into it. For instance, we've announced a competitive-bidding demonstration in which we have some consensus among the experts as to where we ought to go and how to organize our experiment with managed competition. Phoenix and Kansas City are our two sites.

Reinhardt: HCFA has attempted such demonstrations in Baltimore and Denver but was forced to abandon both efforts by private interests that were opposed to them.

Shalala: Yes, in Denver we had bipartisan support to try it. But when we got specific and picked the places, we immediately had political opposition. However, Congress directed us (in the Balanced Budget Act [BBA] of 1997) to try again. We set up an advisory panel on which all of the political interests were represented. And now we're proceeding again.

Reinhardt: I suppose that we should never expect the managed care industry to voluntarily acquiesce to a competitive-bidding process because people instinctively don't like to compete. They prefer administered prices because such prices can be manipulated politically. Who is it, in general, that opposes competitive bidding?

Shalala: One source of opposition is the managed care industry. The companies in that industry believe that such a process will undermine their profits. So the private sector—the famed competitive marketplace—doesn't want competition. They keep saying things like, "Health care is different; we can't predict our costs." We have to have a system that is more nimble, more flexible. Managed care plans would not oppose a competitive-bidding process if they could modify the package of benefits. But if HCFA locks them into a benefits package, they want to be able to negotiate the price, rather than making competitive bids.

INDIAN INTELLIGENCE INTERRO-
GATES REPORTER AFTER VISIT
TO AMERICA

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 1999

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, India has once again shown true nature of its democracy by grilling a reporter who visited the United States. Journalist Sukhbir Singh Osan has exposed the corruption and the atrocities of the Indian government in newspapers and